

Dear English 8 Parents:

Once we've populated their email addresses, I will send a version of this note to all 8th Grade Student @lexedu.org emails in coming days, while still working to manage the priority tides.

PLEASE DO RELAY THIS TO YOUR CHILDREN: this and other communications you may receive. Even if, in best case scenarios, that's already arrived to them, in redundancy.

FIRST AND FOREMOST: the key resource students will need is the Coretta Scott King Award-Winning novel we've started on, "THE WATSONS GO TO BIRMINGHAM": distributed to them with some reading targets on Friday, 3/13, but which may well be in their lockers, if not already brought home with the reading targets shared last week

PLEASE BE SURE to connect with LDMS staff, if that needs retrieving from their locker.

With broadest best wishes to you and your families, and yours beyond: a follow up note to the printed packet shared on the front of all English 8 Remote Learning Packets (available for pickup at LDMS).

Beyond the particular elements noted in that printed overview (meant to reinforce skillsets we've been developing in Reading and Writing this year, and the opportunity to reinforce independent reading habits that the school has prioritized): I take this opportunity to frame broader thoughts on communications and expectations ahead, even as our institutional and cultural footholds change daily.

3 MAIN POINTS:

1. We are very mindful of the range of digital distinctions within our school community, no less than distinct family priorities and rhythms. In that spirit and principle: I do not plan to communicate regularly by email, nor through online classroom updates.

That said, I am ever open to inquiries from your children, or you, as they emerge. Please direct those to ewilson@lexedu.org.

2. Some LDMS courses will be using Google-Classroom. However, for a number of reasons, English 8 will ground itself in other resources/ media. I have posted on my own [LDMS Faculty Webpage](#) all the necessary resources, noted in the printed packet:

http://lexingtonva.gov/community/schools/ldms/faculty_pages/mr_wilson.htm

All are shared in the spirit of providing more accessible access to hotlinks (streamlining entry of longer URLs, and print/screen reading access); and as optional resources for extension learning: further audio and video supports,

supplements, literary and historical contexts. For students who prefer read-aloud versions, at home or when mobile, particular emphasis that chapter-by-chapter Read-Alouds are included in AUDIO BOOK link, as an accommodating option.

tinyurl.com/ReadAloudPlaylistWatsons

A) Materials for General Skill Review, SOL Practice for Essay Outlines/Prompts, and Practice Multiple Choice Writing and Reading Tests are concentrated in the Documents Section.

B) Materials related to their Reading, Reflections, and Writing Skills, relative to “THE WATSONS GO TO BIRMINGHAM,” are concentrated in the AGENDAS section, including the overall Remote Learning Plan printed and distributed at school, in hard copy.

I reinforce that none of the Video links posted there are required viewing; they are simply offered to access at convenience, offer enrichment and extension experience; some, even, to prompt joint study/ family interest/ conversation.

PARTICULAR FAMILY RECOMMENDATION: the free-streamed 90 min Hallmark Channel adaptation of “THE WATSONS GO TO BIRMINGHAM” -- the novel they are progressively reading as their core learning experience/ skill affirmation – strikes me as an especially family friendly option. Family ties, challenges, and coming-of-age variations ground the novel’s central theme, to be sure; a welcoming connection-point, it seems, in these isolating times.

tinyurl.com/WatsonsBirminghamMovie

3. Depending on how institutional plans evolve, I may post further resources on that webpage if we proceed beyond the two-week window presently forecast. To the extent possible -- while again, I do not presume digital accessibility – I would recommend that you and/or your students check in twice a week: via that webpage, school email, and classmates for grounding and collaborative reference. All told, at their age and growing maturity: that seems a good habit to cultivate in their ‘Digital Citizenship’ more generally, as our educational systems evolve – here, and more generally – to online options, in concert with onsite encounters.

Again, thank you at core for your Patience, and your collective good Care... in what Shakespeare once called “The New Normal-ish” (OK, I made that up... but he should have).

Please do let me know if you have any thoughts or concerns as we all move ahead, “in wandering steps and slow... Tomorrow to fresh woods, and pastures new”

(... OK, that’s not Shakespeare either: coupling some of Milton’s most celebrated verses ... to frame a purposeful, patient vision to hope on, ahead).

Eric Wilson

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